Development plan for Ajanta and Ellora Caves

1801. SHRI ANANT RAM JAISWAL:
SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Superintendent of Archaeological Survey of India, has called for a ban on all tourists to the caves of Ajanta; if so, what are the reasons therefor;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Ajanta paintings have suffered heavy damage;

(c) if so, whether it is also a fact that number of tourists is much higher than officially allowed inside the caves in an hour;

(d) if so, what are the causes of increasing number of tourists in an hour inside the cave;

(e) whether Ajanta Ellora development plan was sponsored by the Japanese Government with a view to give an impetus to tourism in Aurangabad;

(f) if so, what was the estimated cost of the development plan and the decision if any taken/likely to be taken by Government with regard thereto; and

(g) whether Government propose any development plan for Ajanta and Ellora caves, if so, what are the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE (KM. SELJA): (a) No, Sir. Cave No. 1 at Ajanta was closed for the public from 26th to 28th February, 1995 and Cave No. 2 from 2nd to 4th March, 1995 for periodical fumigation for arresting bio-deterioration of paintings.

(b) Before taking over the monument under Central protection, the cave paintings had suffered considerable damage in the past due to various factors. But, ever since the Archaeological Survey of India has undertaken the maintenance and preservation of the monuments not only the decay has effectively been arrested but a large number of new painted panels have also been exposed.

(c) No, Sir. The Archaeological Survey of India is strictly enforcing the norms fixed not to allow more than 40 tourists inside a cave at one time.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) Yes, Sir.

(f) and (g) Ajanta and Ellora development plan with an estimated cost of Rs. 195.61 crores prepared by the Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation under OEFC has been approved for providing infrastructural facilities for tourism like improving roads, railways and aerodrome facilities, water supply and sewerage, telecommunication, electricity, construction of tourist complexes and creating visitors management services besides conservation and preservation of monuments, landscaping, etc. Major part of the estimated cost is to be met-out of the financial assistance from the Government of Japan on reimbursable basis.

Evaluation of SAI working

1802. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Tata Consultancy Services has evaluated the working of the Sports Authority of India in the recent past;

(b) whether the Tata Consultancy Services has made any recommendations to improve the SAI; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon?